



BACK PACKS & HARD HATS

The Official CERT Team Member Newsletter



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March 16, 2006

Spot Light: Community Preparedness Working Group Continues to Blaze Trails

After burning a great deal of midnight oil, the Community Preparedness Working Group met the deadline for drafting the "Cobb County Neighborhood CERT Operations Manual." This manual provides guidance to neighborhoods who wish to begin the organization process and create their own Neighborhood CERT (NCERT). Since the completion of that draft, the manual has been presented to the Cobb County Citizen Corps as well as to the senior officials in the Department of Public Safety (DPS) led by Director Mickey Lloyd. We received solid support from all of the reviewers to date and recommendations for the manual have strengthened our connection to the DPS. For example, after that review meeting, representatives from each DPS division were added to our working group so now we have direct input to and feedback from our professional responders. Now participating on the Community Preparedness Working Group are:

Sergeant Brian Batterton from Cobb County Police

Deputy Chief Sam Heaton from Cobb Fire and Emergency Services

Kathy Strickland from Cobb County 911

EMA's next step in the review of the operations manual is its evaluation by the county attorney's office. As soon as that is complete, we will be able to circulate it to our NCERT leaders.

Another milestone in our work is the nomination of neighborhoods for the pilot phase of the NCERT process. To date, eight neighborhoods have been nominated. We have been told to expect two more for the pilot phase. In order to make the roll-out a smooth one, we will be staggering the start-ups so that each neighborhood gets the support that it needs to be successful. The Community Education Working Group is working diligently on materials and presentations for use in the prospective NCERT meetings. As soon as we get the signal from Lanita Lloyd, we will be moving forward with the organization of our first NCERTs.

We already have a list of new projects for the future as well so if you are interested in joining a very dynamic group, please email at vgg@mindspring.com or call (770) 594-8722. Gini Galvin, MD MPH (class # 16) Chair, Community Preparedness Working Group

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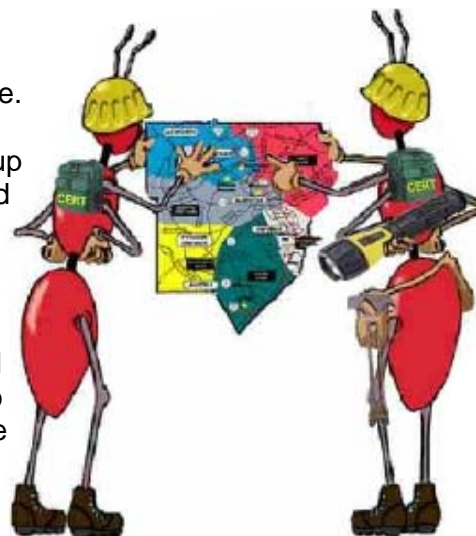
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WE HAVE THE MASCOT

Carol Pilgrim (class # 19)

Our 1st place winner was Joe Baude. And a close 2nd was Victoria Turney.

The CERT Communications Group felt that Joe's design better portrayed us. Joe stated that as the "Ant" symbolizes group effort, teamwork and overall perseverance, similarly the volunteer group of CERT Members, symbolizes group effort, teamwork and paired partners proactively prepared to properly perform with perseverance when reacting to local incidents caused by natural and man-made disasters.



Do You Know?

by Debbie Casteel (class #8)

Dear CERT Members,

Are you aware that we now have a person of our own at the EMA?? The new CERT Program Leader is Rozlynn Hamilton. She will be our point person at EMA. If you have questions, problems, concerns or suggestions, she will be the person to talk to.

Rozlynn is the oldest of three girls. She graduated from high school in Texas in 1996, and she graduated from Clark Atlanta University



with a degree in Criminal Justice in May of 2003. She came to the EMA via the Cobb County Police Academy and, believe me, their loss was our gain!

Rozlynn has always been and still is a people person. She worked her way through college by waiting tables at Steak & Ale where she was one of the favorites of their regular customers. She brings her enthusiasm, smile and her ability to put people at ease with her to the EMA. She has just graduated from the first CERT class of 2006 and is determined to do everything she can to make this the most successful program in the state of Georgia, maybe in the entire country.

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Cobb County...Expect the Best!

This is an official publication of the Cobb County Board of Commissioners.
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Focus On: It's *A DISASTER*

by Carol Pilgrim (class #19)

It is important to remember that there are many types of disasters that call for preparation measures. Many of them are more likely to occur close to home and can pose significant health threats. These disasters can be grouped into 3 types: natural, technological and man-made. Natural disasters in our area would include floods, thunderstorms, tornadoes, extreme cold or heat, fires, landslides, earthquakes, and, as we have seen, hurricanes. Technological and man-made disasters include chemical or biological hazards or incidents, terrorism and acts of war. For example a technological disaster could happen, when through unintentional errors in the processing of food, botulinum toxin may occur in canned food causing many illnesses and even death. An example of a man-made disaster could be a deliberate release of a toxic gas or a germ that could make individuals sick and poison the environment.

After the September 11th attacks, we became more aware of the acts of terrorism. In 2001 the Cobb Douglas Public Health established the Center for Emergency Preparedness and Response to assist in ensuring the health safety of Cobb County residents after a natural or man-made disaster. Do you remember when they announced the airlifting of Katrina evacuees to Dobbins Air Reserve Base? Many of us wondered; "What will be done with them when they get here?" The Center for Emergency Preparedness and Response coordinated with the agencies that were there to meet the Katrina evacuees as they came off the plane. They had arranged for medical help for those who needed it. The Center for Emergency Preparedness and Response, working with local, state, and federal partners, help plan for and respond to health emergencies, disasters and bioterrorism events in Cobb County. Their local partners

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“The sky is falling! The sky is falling!”

by Steve Barden (class #10)

Remember this refrain from the “Chicken Little” children’s story after an acorn hit Chicken Little in the head? Countless parents have used this story to teach their children about courage and about not caving in to unfounded fears. But, Chicken Little and his unfortunate cohorts can teach us even more today. The chicken panicked because he didn’t have a clue about what was going on or what to do about it. Chicken Little needed CERT training in the worst way.

According to the January 25, 2006 edition of *RedLink E-Newsletter*, from the American Red Cross, Metropolitan Atlanta Chapter, “recent Red Cross research points to the pervasive sense that ‘disasters happen in other parts of the country and to other people, not to me.’ ” This newsletter goes on to say that, despite the disasters of the September 11, 2001 attacks or the terrible recent Katrina hurricane, only 46% of Americans believe that another disaster of this magnitude would happen again or affect them personally. In addition, many of the respondents to this research hadn’t thought about the need to prepare and many didn’t even have a clue how to prepare. It looks like our good chicken from the old parable was in this clueless group.

The Red Cross research is disconcerting, especially when viewed from FEMA’s own plans where citizen preparedness is the foundation of its pyramid of a national emergency management system (see the IS-22 August, 2004 FEMA guide [Are You Ready – An In-depth Guide to Citizen Preparedness](#).) As citizens, we have the responsibility of protecting our families and ourselves by knowing what to do “before, during and after an event.” Built upon this foundation of self-responsibility is assistance from the local government, the state and finally the federal government. But, it appears that too many Americans are still playing the part of modern day Chicken Littles – they don’t make plans or preparations beforehand, they don’t know what’s really happening when it happens, and then they panic after the event.

CERT training reduces the fear and anxiety before and during emergencies, whether they are from a national emergency such as a terrorist attack or from a local natural disaster such as a tornado. As trained citizens, we are prepared to be self-sufficient for three days with water, food and first aid, and we know how to assist our neighbors and ourselves until the first responders arrive. With CERT training, we are helping to build the firm foundation of a national emergency management system. This training might even help reduce the local elevated Chicken Little panic levels the next time a few acorns bonk them on their noggins.

9-1-1 Operators and Their Service Systems

by Joe Baude(class # 6)

All Cobb County should know **9-1-1** is the number to call from any cell or wire line phone to get quickly and directly connected to a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP).

In January of 1968, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company announced that within its serving areas the digits **9-1-1** were available for installation on a national scale as the single emergency telephone number. Although numerous public safety officials and individuals at various government organizational levels had long expressed keen interest in the establishment of such a number, that AT&T announcement was primarily prompted by the 1967 recommendation of The President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice that “wherever practical a single (police emergency) number should be established within a metropolitan area and preferably over the entire United States.”

A growing public concern over the increase in crime, accidents and medical emergencies, and from



911 Communications Supervisor Steve Shelnutt

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All about the Citizens Public Safety Academy (CPSA)

Joe Baude (class # 6)

The Citizens Public Safety Academy (CPSA) offers selected Cobb County residents an inside view of the Cobb Department of Public Safety (DPS). The CPSA program is a special training, education and information show-and-tell course. It provides a series of classes for interested and concerned citizens who want to learn first hand about Cobb DPS personnel and their work, systems and equipment. The eleven weekly, three-hour evening classes are presented at the Cobb County Public Safety Training Academy (PSTA) and at various DPS facilities. Students of the CPSA get to meet and know who to call or E-mail in the DPS if they have related public safety problems or questions. Enrollment is limited to 20 students per course, and applicants must be eighteen-years-old or older and have no felony convictions or pending felony charges.

All staff members of the Cobb Public Safety Training Academy are select, trained public safety specialists. They all have real world military and/or civilian life threatening, protection and saving experiences. They all have completed additional training that has fully qualified them to be recognized and respected as special instructors and teachers of people who wish to commit themselves to public safety

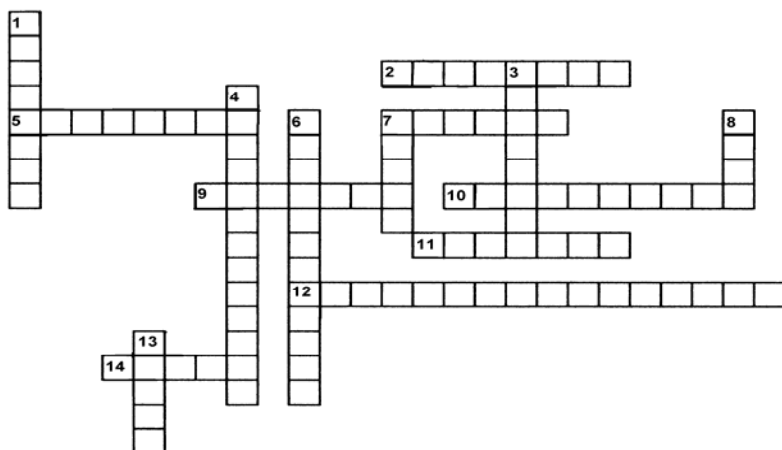
duties.

The CPSA classes include: Course Introduction and PSTA-Facility tour, including experiences in the Vehicle Pursuit Simulator and the Judgmental Shooting Simulator (PRISM) unit; Media Relations, Crime Prevention, Animal Control; 911 Communications Center, Cobb Police Headquarters tour, Crimes Against Persons, Firearms Safety, Cobb County Firing Range, Defensive Tactics, Self-Defense, Personal Safety; Fire Department training program and facilities, HAZMAT (hazardous materials) education & demonstrations, Crimes Against Children and DFACS. A Special Operations facilities tour and demos include K-9, STEP, DUI, CAGE, Rangers, Motor Squad, Hit & Run Squad, Bomb Squad and the SWAT team. Also included are tours of other DPS related entities, such as the Emergency Management Agency, Medical Examiner's Office, and the Adult Detention Center; a review and discussion of the CPSA classes and a graduation program.

Many CERT members were fortunate to attend the first two CPSA programs. Applications are accepted for 2 CPSA courses per year. The next CPSA course is scheduled to start in the Spring of 2006. Applications can be obtained by calling Angela Starnes of the PSTA at 770-499-4100.

CERT TRIVIA Crossword Puzzle DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT THEM!

Carol Thompson (class #16)



Down:

1. (two words), holds all
3. wear it
4. (two words) for your hands outside
6. (three words) has bandages
8. writing tools
13. keeps you hydrated

Across:

2. (two words) for your head
5. to make noise
7. on your lanyard
9. (two words) sticky stuff
10. to keep records in
11. don't forget the batteries
12. to keep away the dust
14. (two words) keep your hands clean
15. useful tool

Guiding CERT?

Joan Mason (Class #14)

Doug Meeks has a heart for public safety and his heart has found a perfect home as Chairman of the Citizens Corps Advisory Council which guides the CERT program.



When Meeks first read an article in the paper on the CERT program he immediately called to sign up for the training. He said that we have such a fantastic public safety program in Cobb County and CERT provides a great opportunity for the citizens of Cobb County and the public safety department, to work together and give back to the community.

Meeks started out as a Cobb County Volunteer Firefighter, "they gave them a hat and a coat and said Go for it." Meeks laughingly recalls. From the fire department, he moved to the Sheriff's Office. Since leaving Cobb County government, Meeks has worked at Lockheed and is presently assigned to the F22 project, or the "top of the line fighter jet." Citizen Corps Chairman Doug Meeks has lived in Cobb County since 1955. He and his wife, Barbara, have two daughters.

"Actually, the police work was the best," Meeks says when pushed to choose a favorite career. He attributes his love for it to Cobb County "...the people you work with and the

people you help."

Since Meeks has left public service and entered the private sector, he has tried to stay active. He was on the Civil Service Board for five years. He joined CERT as a member and in 2004 was appointed to the Citizens Corps Advisory Council. At present, he is chairman of the council.

Meeks sees his role in CERT as two-fold. First and foremost, he is an active member and is ready to assist in any way he can. Additionally, as a member of the Advisory Council, he helps with guidelines for the CERT program.

"Actually, it (CERT) has progressed faster and farther than I originally thought it could. I have been in the position to see how local jurisdictions do things, and I think Cobb County is Number One," Meeks says. It would seem that the Federal Government agrees. "We are getting a lot of support and press from the Federal (government) in efforts here in Cobb (County)... when other counties call FEMA, they say 'call Cobb County'. We are making the pattern for other counties to follow."

Who would Meeks give the credit to? "YOU... We have a great number of personnel in the CERT program with outstanding credentials to assist in their area and their willingness to assist has been fantastic. They are the ones that make the organization."

9-1-1 (Continued from page 3)

Federal Government awareness that current emergency reporting methods were inadequate, and that in a population as large and as mobile as ours, a common emergency number made sense.

In response to these concerns, the Federal Government in March of 1973, from the Office of Telecommunications Policy, Executive Office of the President, issued National Policy Bulletin Number 73-1 endorsing the concept of **9-1-1** and urging its nationwide implementation.

The choice of the specific number, **9-1-1**, was based primarily on cost factors, the comparative

ease with which telephone company equipment could be modified to accept the number and on other considerations which indicated that the combination of the digits **9-1-1** would be easily remembered and dialed by most persons.

Modern **9-1-1** center operator stations are staffed by highly qualified and trained public service personnel and supported by radio, cell and wire-line communications and power backup systems that are configured with capacities, capabilities and reliability required to meet the demands of 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week traffic that can handle high bursts of calls with little to no congestion or contention issues that could cause **9-1-1** call traffic jams and answer delays.

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Hurricane Katrina - A personal account

by Mark A Massey (class # 23)

As I walked around my favorite fishing lake in Kennesaw searching for largemouth bass, I noticed another man was also fishing. I decided to say hello and see if he had caught anything. He told me that he and his family ended up in Kennesaw after Hurricane Katrina demolished New Orleans. As we started to talk about fishing and other things we each liked to do I introduced myself and learned that his name was Robert. He was a polite and humble man with a pleasant demeanor. He, along with his wife, a cousin, two children and two dogs were staying in a nice log cabin that used to be part of a Boy Scout camp that was provided by AMLI, the local property management company.

We fished for a long time while talking about the devastation of Katrina and how it had affected his family. He said that he and his family lived very close to the New Orleans Superdome. When they were rescued by a Coast

Guard helicopter the water level was at least 10 feet high and rising. I tried to comprehend the horrific affects this event must have had on his family and several thousand others. He and his family were transported to a temporary shelter in Arkansas. They were thankful to have shelter. Daily food rations were sparse; mostly juice, fruit and crackers. By bedtime, they were usually famished. Water was the most important commodity for continued survival and it was scarce. They were later relocated to Georgia.

I believe that God was looking after Robert and his family by guiding them to Kennesaw. When last I spoke with Robert, he said he was going to help his relatives in Mississippi with some construction projects. He could help them with his trade skills and they could help him with some income. I am happy to report that Robert and his family now have permanent housing, and enough food and water.

Robert was able to find construction work in Georgia;

however, it was short-lived. The question I asked Robert was WHY? Why couldn't Georgia and other states working with Katrina victims do a better job helping people get back on their feet? Robert told me that he felt FEMA and the American Red Cross had done a magnificent job. Overall he felt that he and his family had been treated with respect and dignity.

The lesson learned from Katrina is that a catastrophe like this one can happen again. We must resist complacency and, to the extent possible, focus on how we can prepare for such a major event. You never know when this might happen to YOU! The CERT training is one small way to begin to prepare.

I hope their story remains a constant reminder of the havoc a natural disaster can unleash. I will always keep this wonderful family in my prayers. The next time I see Robert, I will tell him of this article about his family. I am sure that it will put a smile on his face to know that people are thinking about them.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

We want to hear from you. If you have something you want to share or questions you want answered, please write or e-mail us.

cobbcertnews@yahoo.com

or write to:

Attn: Back Packs & Hard Hats
%Cobb County Emergency Management Agency
140 North Marietta Parkway
Marietta, GA 30060

Dear Back Packs & Hard Hats,

I went to Discount Army Navy and talked to the owner. They are willing to give CERT members a 10% discount. CERT members will need to show their ID's at the store to get the discount.

Army Navy Discount Center
1214 Hayes Industrial Drive
Marietta, GA 30062
Phone 770-426-7702 Fax 770-426-0452
www.armynavydiscountcenter.com

*Respectfully,
Dave Litts*

Crossword Puzzle Answers: 1.Back Pack, 2. Hard Hat, 3. Vest, 4. Leather Gloves, 5. Whistle, 6. First Aid Kit, 7. Badge, 8. Markers, 9. Duct Tape, 10. Notebook, 11. Flashlight, 12. Masks, 13. Water, 14. Disposable Gloves, 15. Wrench

Home Safe?

by Joe Baude (class #6)

If you're playing baseball, it means - "safe at home base." You either hit a home run or were batted in. If you're traveling on a "home-run" trip, it means you arrived at home safely. The comfort and safety of your home is



where you and your family gather and live together. You choose to buy and have on hand your family comfort and safety needs. You surely are aware that every year, as a result of various unexpected incidents, many people have abandoned, left, withdrawn from or otherwise - evacuated their homes. Unexpected incidents often cause family members to become evacuees. They are - like - "battered out" of their home base. How

well have you chosen to buy and have on hand family emergency comfort and safety needs?

Mickey Lloyd, Cobb County Director of Public Safety, speaks of this in a two minute video "Disaster Supplies Kit." It shows how your family can cope best by preparing for disasters before they strike. It explains how to assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit. You can learn how to assemble one in the instructional video that can be seen at

<http://ema.cobbcountyga.gov/preparedness.htm>



It's a DISASTER (Continued from page 2)



include the area hospitals, health care providers and emergency medical staff, local fire department and law enforcement, and the Cobb Emergency Management Agency (CEMA). State partners include the Georgia Division of

Public Health including the Georgia Public Health Laboratory. Federal partners include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Leticia Mathis, Emergency Preparedness Specialist of the Center of Emergency Preparedness and Response says they are constantly reviewing past experiences and planning for new health disasters. They keep track of reported health concerns and when there are unexplained number increases they notify their partners who then spring into action. Examples:

Groups of individuals becoming ill at about the

same time.

Sudden illness in healthy individuals.

Sudden increase in illnesses: pneumonia, bleeding disorders, unexplained rashes or skin irritations, muscle weakness and diarrhea.

Outbreaks in human and animal or bird populations at the same time.

Unusual clustering of illness at the same time or in the same area.

When asked what as a Cobb County resident, can we do to plan and prepare for a disaster, Ms. Mathis replied, "With the many recent hurricanes we have found we need better disaster preparation." In addition to your CERT training, you should educate yourself about potential weapons of mass destruction such as anthrax, smallpox and the plague. You should wear a medic alert bracelet if you have a specific medical condition.

For more information, please visit:

www.atlantaredcross.org

www.bt.cdc.gov

www.CobbAndDouglasPublicHealth.org

Back Packs & Hard Hats

The Official CERT Team Member Newsletter
cobbcertnews@yahoo.com

Cobb County Emergency Management Agency
140 North Marietta Parkway
Marietta, GA 30060

Mailing
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9-1-1 (Continued from page 5)

Although Neighborhood CERT *status reporting* should *not* be directed to **9-1-1**, when a CERT member's neighborhood is affected by a disaster and a CERT member is one of the first people on the scene, it is their right and responsibility to call **9-1-1** to report the incident that requires the immediate attention of one or more police officers, firefighters or medics.

We encourage everyone to become familiar with information provided on the Cobb E-911 WEB page at <http://911.cobbcountyga.gov/>

CERT BUZZ CARD

First Alert: The 911 Call

In the case where you are the first on the scene, you should be able to answer all questions quickly and correctly.

The initial questions are in this order:

A. What is the location (WHERE)?

An exact address is the most desirable type of location to provide.

If an exact address is not available, make every reasonable attempt to provide directions from a known address.

If an address is not available, attempt to obtain the closest intersection.

B. What is your name (WHO)?

C. What is your phone number?

D. What is the emergency (WHAT)?

E. When did the incident occur (WHEN)?

F. And any further Descriptors?

In the case of a disaster, a description of the event in as much detail as available and a brief summary of potential local or industrial hazards would be of help in summoning the appropriate help.